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LAW OF THE SEA

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF
THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE

Letter dated 18 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the letter dated 26 August 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, which has been circulated as document addressed to you (A/50/1033), regarding objections of the United Arab Emirates to certain provisions of the Act on the Marine Areas of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, 1993 ("Marine Areas Act"), and make the following clarifications:

1. Even before the enactment of the said Act, there existed a few acts and decrees pertaining to the Islamic Republic of Iran's rights and jurisdiction over its maritime areas, each of which dealt with one or more issues involving the law of the sea. The Marine Areas Act was drafted to consolidate and supplement all previous relevant legislative provisions into a single statutory instrument, taking into account the progressive development of the law of the sea, including the extension of the jurisdiction of coastal States.

2. There is no provision in the Marine Areas Act to impede navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. The Islamic Republic of Iran does not object to the freedom of navigation, provided that such freedom is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal States, in conformity with international law.

3. Although paragraph 2 of the letter from the United Arab Emirates is irrelevant to the subject matter in question, I wish to refer to my previous letter dated 1 October 1996 addressed to you in this regard (S/1996/818).

4. The Islamic Republic of Iran reserves its right to make comments as regards certain provisions of the Federal Law No. 19 of 1993 in respect of the delimitation of the maritime zones of the United Arab Emirates of 17 October 1993 that contravene the relevant rules and provisions of the international law of the sea.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 24 and 77.

(Signed) Kamal KHARRAZI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative